



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Nearly 5,000 Join Senator Ritchie for Telephone Town Hall on “Bath Salts”

PATTY RITCHIE July 24, 2012

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Experts Answer Questions, Get Information Out to Public on Dangerous Synthetic Drugs

Nearly 5,000 people joined State Senator Patty Ritchie Tuesday night, for a live telephone town hall on the dangers of “bath salts,” synthetic drug compounds that are at the center of a series of increasingly bizarre and deadly incidents across the region.

“The name sounds innocent, but bath salts are anything but,” said Senator Ritchie. “These synthetic drugs are accessible, cheap and their abuse is causing very serious problems across our region.”

“I was pleased to host this town hall, to give people who are concerned about this problem, the opportunity to get their questions answered and to learn about the dangers and warning signs related to bath salts use—hopefully preventing abuse, halting this epidemic and saving lives.”

Senator Ritchie was joined by Anita Seefried-Brown, a certified drug counselor from the Jefferson County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council. In addition to holding certifications in substance abuse prevention, she also serves as a prevention counselor in numerous schools across the region.

Ms. Seefried-Brown has organized three upcoming “Synthetic Drug Training” sessions at Jefferson Community College in Watertown, which are open to the public. The sessions will be held on August 8th and 15th. For more information, please contact the Jefferson County Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council at (315) 788-4660.

Also joining Senator Ritchie for the telephone town hall were Jefferson County District Attorney Cindy Intschert, as well as Oswego County Undersheriff Eugene Sullivan; who lent their expertise on questions regarding bath salts and the law.

The problem of bath salts has become so serious that the Army recently launched a major crackdown on abusers, and it recently drew the attention of the state Attorney General, who sued 16 businesses, including stores in our region, to get the products off the shelves.

Recent cases involving bath salts have included a man who police say held a knife to the throat of a stranger's son, a gun-wielding man on top of a roof, and another who was acting strangely before he fell into the Oneida River and drowned.

Senator Ritchie is a sponsor, along with Assemblyman Will Barclay, of anti-bath salt legislation (S.6717), and a new law to prevent the sale of dangerous imitation drugs went into effect last year, yet sales persist.